

Written Testimony Concerning Governor's Bill 6360 AN ACT CONCERNING  
IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTICUT'S COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY STRATEGY.

"Stop complaining about the cold and put on a sweater!"

That is my mantra. And it works for my family. But I am fortunate because my house is well insulated, and I have water saving faucets and shower heads and energy efficient lighting, not to mention insulated pipes and sealed ducts. It is comfortable, if a little cooler than some in my family would wish. And I have the Home Energy Solutions (HES) program to thank for that.

The HES technicians did most of this work, and I took their recommendations to heart and had insulation installed, replaced my whole house fan with one that keeps out the cold in the winter, and installed a reset control on my furnace so my oil burner doesn't constantly re-heat the water in my water tank. I spent good money on these energy saving measures, and helped the local economy to boot! My electricity and oil bills have been reduced significantly.

The Westport Home Energy Challenge reached out to the community (partnering with 20 organizations) to get the word out about the HES program. And it worked.

Over 660 Westport homeowners (including those on energy assistance) have taken advantage of the Home Energy Solutions program in the last 2 years and have reduced their electricity use by 2,386,365 kWh, resulting in a reduction of 1,918,399 lbs of carbon dioxide AND they are avoiding \$281,491 annually in electricity costs! Add in the heating savings and that number increases significantly!

As chair of the program, I have had the opportunity to speak with numerous homeowners who completed the HES visit, and were very pleased with the program, its effect on their bills, and home comfort. And I had several new homeowners tell me they were pleased to know their home efficiency, information they received from the HES visit, done by the seller. Others have followed through with deeper energy upgrades, further improving their home energy efficiency, and Connecticut's employment base in many industries. Energy Efficiency is the low-hanging sustainability fruit in Connecticut.

But over 60% of Westporters heat with oil. The HES program will be closed to families with oil heat in June unless more funding is made available.

**I ask that you establish a stable funding source for heating oil energy efficiency (i.e. a surcharge on fuel oil), as has been done for electricity and natural gas.**

And secure funding would allow the state to consider expanding its programing, and not just through utility bill inserts and ads that many people ignore. The Westport Home Energy Challenge has proven that getting the word out in a variety of ways makes a big difference to community involvement.

**I ask that you expand the energy efficiency programs and the methods of engaging residents, to include partnerships with community organizations.**

This is an important issue for me and Connecticut residents. Without proper support and funding for these programs, Connecticut will lose the energy efficiency battle, a loss the state cannot afford. You can play a vital role in ensuring the future of Connecticut's energy efficiency programs.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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